



## WORLD CUP 2018 TOP GOALSCORER: GOLDEN BOOT BETTING GUIDE

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### Who to pick in World Cup Golden Boot betting?

World Cup Golden Boot betting – the one market that always stands out every four years!

It is always a fascinating market, simply because it features so many world class players.

This time, in Russia 2018, we are treated to so many outstanding attackers that it has to be a brilliant race.

If you are planning to get involved in World Cup Golden Boot betting, bear in mind that the book closes with many bookies on June 14. The day before Russia 2018 starts.



*MADRID, SPAIN – APRIL 23: Ivan Rakitic of Barcelona (4) celebrates as he scores their second goal with Lionel Messi of Barcelona as Cristiano Ronaldo of Real Madrid looks dejected during the La Liga match between Real Madrid CF and FC Barcelona at Estadio Bernabeu on April 23, 2017 in Madrid, Spain. (Photo by Gonzalo Arroyo Moreno/Getty Images)*

## Leo Messi vs Cristiano Ronaldo

Perhaps the most interesting angle on World Cup Golden Boot betting is the individual battle between Leo Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Coming into the tournament, Messi and Ronaldo are amongst the favourites. There is no getting away from the fact though that they both play for sides that are unlikely to win the World Cup.

As a result, you may be better off backing a striker or forward from Germany, Spain, France or Brazil.

Or perhaps, this is where the Ronaldo-Messi dominance of recent years comes to an end. And the likes of Mohamed Salah and Harry Kane step up to the plate?

Below is a player by player guide to Golden Boot betting at the 2018 World Cup.

## Player by player Golden Boot betting guide



*Lionel Messi of Argentina looks on during the Brazil Global Tour match between Brazil and Argentina at Melbourne Cricket Ground on June 9, 2017 in Melbourne, Australia. (Photo by Robert Cianflone/Getty Images)*

Lionel Messi (Argentina)



Having won the European golden shoe four times in his career, will Lionel Messi add the World Cup golden boot to his array of titles?

This season he's scored a hatful of goals which has helped his side win the Copa del Rey and La Liga double again. Which means Messi has now won 32 major honours during his time with the Catalan giants.

However, he hasn't been as successful with his national team never lifting silverware in an Argentina shirt, so can he put that right this summer in Russia?

Messi has now won over 120 caps which puts him 3rd on the Argentinian list. Just 20 behind record appearance holder Javier Zanetti.

He's also scored 61 international goals, more than anyone in Argentine history. But very few of them have come in major tournaments.

## Messi: The main man for Argentina

Messi has netted just 8 times at Copa Américas and in 15 World Cup games he's only managed 5 goals.

However, 4 of those came in Brazil 2014 which helped his side reach their first World Cup final since 1990. He was integral in qualification too.

He scored over a third of all 19 goals they managed in 18 qualifying games of CONMEBOL including a hat-trick in their last game, a 3-1 victory in Ecuador, a game if they'd failed to win they wouldn't have qualified.

This proves he can score when it really counts. With the likes of Ángel Di María, Sergio Agüero and Ángel Correa set to start alongside Messi, he is very likely to get plenty of chances.



*Cristiano Ronaldo lifts the Euro 2016 trophy following the UEFA EURO 2016 Final match between Portugal and France at Stade de France on July 10, 2016 in Paris, France.*

## Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal)

Having never managed to score more than once at a World Cup Finals, is it time for Ronaldo to deliver on the world's biggest stage in potentially his last chance at World Cup glory?

In each of the three World Cups he's appeared in, Cristiano Ronaldo has only ever scored a solitary goal and only against weaker opposition, Iran, North Korea and Ghana.

Portugal's first game is against Spain. But their other two Group B fixtures are against Morocco and Iran so you'd back Ronaldo to score taking Portugal further in the tournament.

With creative geniuses like Gonçalo Guedes, Bernardo Silva and João Moutinho in his team setting up many chances, Ronaldo will feel he has a great chance of winning the Golden Boot betting.

## Ronaldo is in great form in 2018

He comes to the World Cup off the back of another incredible season. He's scored 42 goals in 41 games which has helped Real reach their fourth Champions League Final in five attempts.

Amazingly though, 26 of those goals have come in the second half of the season and he'd only managed 4 in La Liga at the turn of the year.

Cristiano Ronaldo is hitting form at just the right time and could be full of confidence. With a Champions League final to come, so could he fire Portugal to their first ever world title?





*RECIFE, BRAZIL – MARCH 25: Neymar of Brazil reacts during a match between Brazil and Uruguay as part of 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia Qualifiers at Arena Pernambuco on March 25, 2016 in Recife, Brazil. (Photo by Buda Mendes/Getty Images)*

## Neymar (Brazil)

After scoring four goals and finishing third in the standings on home soil four years ago, will Neymar's goals fire Brazil to a sixth World Cup triumph?

Neymar scored 28 goals in 30 appearances for Paris Saint-Germain this season. And they secured another quadruple clean sweep of domestic titles.

PSG crashed out the UEFA Champions League in the round of 16 against holders Real Madrid. Meaning his last chance of claiming his much desired Ballon d'Or means he will have to shine this summer.

However, Neymar hasn't featured at all since a home win over Marseille on the 25th of February due to a serious foot injury. Brazil manager Tite assures fans that his star man will be fit and firing for their first group match against Switzerland on the 17th June.

His fitness could be a concern. Although it could work in his favour as the three month break prior to the beginning of the tournament could mean he is fresh. And ready to go for that all important opening game.

## Can Neymar justify the hype?

Neymar has a fantastic scoring record for Brazil. Despite only being 26, he is already fourth on the list of all time goalscorers behind only Pelé, Ronaldo and Romário.

However, despite scoring four times at the last World Cup, he failed to live up to his hype in both of the two Copa Américas since. Neymar scored just once in the opening game in 2015 before being sent off against Columbia and missing the rest of the tournament through suspension.

Neymar then pulled out of the Copa América Centenario squad so he could participate in the Rio Olympics.

This is his time to shine. Will Neymar prove to be the player that he clearly thinks he is? Or will he be another potential superstar who is unable to fulfil the hype created around them?



*RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL – AUGUST 20: (L-R) Wallace of Brazil, Gabriel Jesus of Brazil, Neymar of Brazil, Gabriel Barbosa of Brazil and Rafinha of Brazil celebrate with their gold medals following the Men's Football Final between Brazil and Germany at the Maracana Stadium on Day 15 of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games on August 20, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (Photo by Clive Mason/Getty Images)*

## Gabriel Jesus (Brazil)

Could it be Neymar's international teammate, Gabriel Jesus who becomes the sixth World Cup golden boot winner?

His goals have helped Manchester City to a Carabao Cup and Premier League double this season, the first trophies he's won in European football.

Due to injury sustained on New Year's Eve and strong competition from Sergio Agüero, Jesus hasn't been a guaranteed starter for Guardiola's side this campaign. However, he boasts one of the best shooting accuracies in the Premier League with 48% of his shots resulting goals.

If he can keep this up he's certainly a contender to win the Golden Boot betting.

## Gabriel Jesus: Brazil's front line striker

Through his team selection, Brazil manager Tite has made it clear that Gabriel Jesus is his first choice centre forward.

He's picked him there in each and every one of Brazil's last eight matches including away to Germany last time out when he scored the only goal of the game.



His quality coupled with the manager's faith and stupendous teammates, like Coutinho, Neymar and Douglas Costa, supplying him he is in with a serious shout.



*PARIS, FRANCE – MARCH 28: Antoine Griezmann (2ndR) of France celebrates with team mates after scoring only for the goal to be disallowed during the International Friendly match between France and Spain at*

*Stade de France on March 28, 2017 in Paris, France. (Photo by Dan Mullan/Getty Images)*

## Antoine Griezmann (France)

Having won the Golden Boot at his last tournament, Euro 2016, will Antoine Griezmann repeat his goal scoring feat in Russia?

He has an impressive international record having scored 19 goals already. Six of those came at Euro 2016 but he failed to net in 5 appearances at Brazil 2014.

However, this is a different Griezmann, one who loves to play off a big man which it looks like he will be allowed to do.

At club level his form has improved when Diego Costa arrived in January and he has a similarly strong partnership with international teammate, Olivier Giroud.

Since joining Chelsea, Giroud has been regularly starting and he looks likely to start up top with Griezmann which could benefit the Atleti striker in his golden boot quest.

However, one problem for Griezmann could be he isn't the only source of goals. Team mates like Kylian Mbappé, Dimitri Payet and Giroud all score goals. So France aren't reliant on him as their only goal threat, so he will have to step to the fore to be the main man.

However France are amongst the favourites to lift the World Cup in July which can only benefit Griezmann's claim.

More games means more chances to score.

We haven't had a French World Cup Golden Boot winner since 1958. When Just Fontaine scored a staggering 13 goals in Sweden. And, although it won't require those astronomical numbers, will there be another in Russia?



*Mohamed Salah following the Premier League match between Liverpool and Brighton and Hove Albion at Anfield on May 13, 2018 in Liverpool, England.*

**<http://news.ghanamotion.com/world-cup-2018-group-b-betting-predictions/>**

## Mohamed Salah (Egypt)

All 26 previous Golden Boot winners or joint winners have done so playing for a European or South American nation.

Is that about to change?

The previous highest goalscorer by an African player was Roger Milla at Italia 90. Who scored 4 goals when he finished third in the standings.

However, since joining Liverpool, Mohamed Salah has proven that anything is possible. The African Footballer of the Year has scored a staggering amount of goals this season. Including 11 in Liverpool's run to their first Champions League final since 2007.

Salah and Egypt also face a relatively friendly group for him to bang in the goals. Despite the fact Uruguay will be very tough opponents, neither Russia nor Saudi Arabia's defences will provide much resistance to stop the most in-form player on the planet.

However, it is highly likely that, should Egypt progress from Group A, they will have to take on one of the two of tournament favourites, Portugal or Spain.

## Mohamed Salah: The Egyptian King!



This could be where the tournament ends for Egypt and Salah which would make it very difficult for him to win the Golden Boot in just 4 games.

Another problem Salah may face is the quality of teammates. He's flourished alongside Firmino and Mané this season but Egypt cannot boast this kind of calibre of player.

Only one of Salah's 33 goals for his country have come against sides who will compete at this summer's showpiece tournament.

In his last international appearance, he scored the opening goal in a 2-1 defeat to European Champions Portugal in a friendly. A side he may be facing again come June.

As Egypt's main source of goals he has a great chance of claiming the Golden Boot. It's just a question of whether his team will stay in the tournament long enough for him to do so.



*DORTMUND, GERMANY – MARCH 22: Michael Keane of England (L) puts pressure on Timo Werner of Germany (R) during the international friendly match between Germany and England at Signal Iduna Park on March 22, 2017 in Dortmund, Germany. (Photo by Lars Baron/Bongarts/Getty Images)*  
**<http://news.ghanamotion.com/2033-2/>**

## Timo Werner (Germany)

Will we see a Germany Golden Boot winner for the fourth time and for the third time in 4 tournaments?

If we are, it is likely to be RB Salzburg striker Timo Werner.

The 22-year-old has scored 40 goals in his two seasons with the club including 7 in Europe this season.

Helping his team reach the UEFA Europa League quarter final.

He also has an outstanding record for his country.

He's scored 7 goals in just 12 appearances including 3 at last summer's Confederations Cup.

With the likes of Toni Kroos, Leroy Sané and Mesut Özil also a part of this Germany team, he will get chances and he's proven in recent years that he will take them.



*HULL, ENGLAND – MAY 21: Harry Kane of Tottenham Hotspur poses in the tunnel with the golden boot and match ball after the Premier League match between Hull City and Tottenham Hotspur at KC Stadium on May 21, 2017 in Hull, England. (Photo by Laurence Griffiths/Getty Images)*

## Harry Kane (England)



It is testament to Harry Kane's form over the past three seasons that he arrives at this World Cup firmly in the Golden Boot conversation.

Kane does tick a lot of boxes in terms of players that win the Golden Boot.

As England's talisman, Kane will surely start every game and comes into the tournament after scoring 30 goals in a Premier League season for the first time.

The fact Kane failed to win the Premier League Golden Boot for the third time in a row, may also make him desperate for World Cup goals.

Kane is Gareth Southgate's main striker. And with the likes of Raheem Sterling and Dele Alli feeding him, games against Panama and Tunisia could be full of goals.

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## Previous World Cup Golden Boot winners?

Previous winners and how many goals they scored:

**2014 World Cup in Brazil:** James Rodriguez (Colombia) – 6 goals.

**2010 World Cup in South Africa:** Diego Forlan (Uruguay), Thomas Muller (Germany), Wesley Sneijder (Holland) and David Villa (Spain) – 5 goals.

**2006 World Cup in Germany:** Miroslav Klose (Germany) – 5 goals.

**2002 World Cup in Japan & South Korea:** Ronaldo (Brazil) – 8 goals.

**1998 World Cup in France:** Davor Suker (Croatia) – 6 goals.

**1994 World Cup in USA:** Oleg Salenko (Russia), Hristo Stoichkov (Bulgaria) – 6 goals.

**1990 World Cup in Italy:** Salvator Schillachi (Italy) – 6 goals.

**1986 World Cup in Mexico:** Gary Lineker (England) – 6 goals.

**1982 World Cup in Spain:** Paulo Rossi (Italy) – 6 goals.

**1978 World Cup in Argentina:** Mario Kempes (Argentina) – 6 goals.

The image shows a large, stylized 'FYI' logo in white on a black background. A small play button icon is integrated into the top of the 'i'. Below the logo, a blue bar contains the word 'WATCH' in white capital letters.



## What can we learn from previous World Cup Golden Boot winners?

Generally, the winner of the Golden Boot at a World Cup goes very deep into the competition. It helps to play the final or third place play-off.

The one exception to that rule is Oleg Salenko in 1994. With Mohamed Salah likely to play a maximum four games, Salenko should give the Egyptian hope.

Whilst attacking midfielders and wingers have won the Golden Boot. Looking at the list above, it is really out-and-out strikers that win the award.

Perhaps James Rodriguez in 2014 has alerted us to a new World Cup trend. But we still think back the most likely top goal scorer for a side that will reach the last four.

And, one that is likely to reach the final.

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